

conditions of growth, but that there were many such groups at the time. De Vitry was filled with sadness by what he saw at the papal court. All were busy with secular affairs, kings and kingdoms, quarrels and lawsuits, so that it was almost impossible to speak about spiritual matters. He greatly admired the Franciscans, who were trying to live like the early Christians and to save souls, and who shamed the prelates, who were "dogs who do not bark." The strongest contrasts between the gospel ideals and the church of that time were presented by wealth and the hierarchy. Francis renounced all property. Poverty was idealized and allegorized. Since he would not produce or own things, he had to beg or borrow them from others who were therefore obliged to sin for him. The first corollary from the admiration of poverty was the glorification of beggary and its exaltation above productive labor.<sup>1</sup> There is a rhapsody on poverty in the *Roman de la Rose*. If it is base and corrupting to admire wealth, it is insane to admire poverty. It never can be anything more than a pose or affectation. The count of Chiusi gave to Francis the mountain La Verna as a place of retirement and meditation. Armed men were necessary to take possession of this place on account of beasts and robbers.<sup>2</sup> Here, then, we have all the crime, selfishness, and violence of "property." The legendary story of Francis is fabulous. It is a product of the popular notions of the time. He was said to perform miracles. Crowds flocked to him. His order spread with great rapidity and without much effort on his part. Evidently it just met the temper, longings, and ideals of the time.

Its strength was that it suited the current mores.  
Unlimited  
money and property were given to it. Francis died  
in 1226 and  
was canonized in 1228. Dominic (1170-1221)  
aimed to found  
an order of preachers in order to oppose the  
Albigenses and  
other heretics. He wanted to found a learned  
and scholarly  
order which should be able to preach and teach.  
He made it a  
mendicant order in order to preserve it from the  
corruptions to

<sup>1</sup> The ideas of Francis had been promulgated by the  
Timotheists in the fifth  
century. They were then declared heretical (Lea, *Sacerd.*  
*Celib.*, 377).

<sup>2</sup> Carmichael, *In Tuscany*, 224.